

REMARKS FOR ADMINISTRATOR BOLDEN
Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Rollout
Feb. 14, 2011

(Welcome all and wish Happy Valentine's Day)

I want to acknowledge the presence Deputy Administrator Lori Garver and other members of the tremendous leadership team here at NASA and thank them for their dedicated public service and deep love for space exploration and its endless possibilities. This entire NASA leadership team is working hard every day to help move NASA to the next level of innovation and excellence, and I thank each of them for their service on behalf of the American people.

I also want to take a moment to offer thanks for the miraculous progress being made by a true NASA friend and supporter, Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, as she continues her battle for full recovery from the assassination attempt on her several weeks ago. We hold Gabby and her family in our thoughts and prayers – especially her husband, Mark Kelly, who rejoined his STS-134 crew last week to resume training as commander of that April shuttle mission.

It is now my privilege to present President Obama's Fiscal Year 2012 budget request of \$18.7 billion for NASA.

This budget requires us to live within our means so we can invest in our future. It maintains our strong commitment to human spaceflight and new technologies. It establishes critical priorities and invests in the excellent science, aeronautics research, and education programs that will help us win the future.

At its core, NASA's mission remains fundamentally the same as it always has been: ***to reach for new heights and reveal the unknown so that what we do and learn will benefit all humankind.***

But now, we carry out this mission with a renewed commitment to focusing on what we do best, while empowering today's innovators and entrepreneurs to carry out the rest.

Even in these difficult fiscal times, the budget supports all elements of the bipartisan NASA Authorization Act of 2010, and carries out our

national goals of out-innovating, out-educating, and out-building the rest of the world.

Because these are tough fiscal times, tough choices had to be made. Our number one priority is safely flying out the shuttle and maintaining the safety and well-being of the American astronauts currently living and working in space, and those – like Mark Kelly and his STS-134 shuttle crewmates – who are training to serve this nation on the frontiers of tomorrow.

The President's FY2012 Budget funds a diverse array of human spaceflight programs that maximize our use of current capabilities such as the International Space Station, facilitate innovative approaches to ensure U.S. leadership in low Earth orbit, and position us to explore the frontiers of deep space.

Taken together, these human spaceflight initiatives will enable America to retain its position as a leader in space exploration for generations to come.

In low Earth orbit, the space station remains our anchor. In this amazing orbiting laboratory, we collaborate with other nations to live and work together in space, and perform cutting edge research and technology demonstrations that are critical to our eventual exploration beyond low Earth orbit with humans. To sustain the crucial role of the International Space Station in our long-term exploration plan, we must have safe, reliable and affordable access to it for our astronauts and their supporting equipment.

That's why this budget boosts funding of our partnership with the commercial space industry, and prioritizes our efforts to ensure that American astronauts and the cargo they need are transported by American companies, rather than continuing to outsource this work to foreign governments.

This new approach to getting our crews and cargo into orbit will create good jobs and expand opportunities for the American economy. If we are to win the future and out-build our competitors, it is essential that we make this program a success.

We've also made the responsible choice to fund the full pension liability for United Space Alliance. Not only is it contractually required, but it's the right thing to do. These workers have supported our flagship program, the space shuttle, as well as the ISS and other missions, heart and soul for many years.

In addition to supporting the ISS and commercial crew to sustain our leadership in low Earth orbit, we need to invest in two primary areas: the flight systems to take us beyond low Earth orbit -- including a deep space crew vehicle and an evolvable heavy-lift rocket -- and key research and technology to enable the long journeys into deep space. The budget funds work in these critical areas.

The heavy-lift rocket and crew vehicle are crucial to exploring all of our beyond-Earth destinations, so we need to get started on them now.

NASA is actively pursuing the Space Launch System (SLS) and Multi-purpose Crew Vehicle (MPCV) and will release plans for them late this Spring.

Our destinations for humans beyond Earth have not changed – among them are the Moon, asteroids, and Mars. We will prioritize our investments in the systems, research and technology for deep space to enable a logical sequence of future human exploration missions.

These are difficult fiscal times and we have long-term challenges that will not be fully addressed in any single year, but we keep faith with the bi-partisan agreement reached last year and begin to focus on them in this budget.

This budget provides for many new milestones in scientific discovery, both new missions and ongoing support for the many space and Earth observatories successfully carrying out their work now.

In fact, this evening we expect to receive new images of comet Tempel 1 from our Stardust-NExT spacecraft. This innovative and cost-effective reuse of an existing spacecraft will allow scientists for the first time to look for changes on a comet's surface that occurred following that comet's orbit around the sun. You saw this approach this past

November with the repurposed Deep Impact Mission's encounter with Comet Hartley 2 as EPOXI.

The Kepler space telescope continues to find new planets orbiting other suns. Later this year the MESSENGER spacecraft will arrive at Mercury, and the Mars Science Laboratory is set to launch early in Fiscal Year 2012, taking the most advanced payload of scientific gear ever used to the surface of Mars.

The President has responsibly invested in a NASA of the future, and we are proud to be part of our Nation's reinvigorated research, technology and innovation agenda. NASA technology investments will stimulate the economy and build America's global economic competitiveness through the creation of new products and services, new business and industries, and high-quality, sustainable jobs.

By investing in high payoff, high-risk technology that industry cannot tackle today, NASA matures the technology required for its future missions while proving the capabilities and lowering the cost of other government and commercial space activities. Through these

technological investments, NASA and our Nation will remain on the cutting-edge and out-innovate all competitors.

Our work is not without challenges, and it will take a lot of effort and all of NASA's creative and problem-solving skills to meet them.

Delivering a space launch system and a multi-purpose crew vehicle that are affordable and fit within the guidelines established by Congress and the President in order to meet our Nation's exploration goals is not an easy task but it is a task we must achieve to maintain U.S. leadership in technology and exploration.

Remember - NASA does not thrive on easy. NASA does the hard stuff.

Among the ways we're looking at addressing these challenges are innovative acquisition approaches and increased competition to reduce development costs.

This year we learned some hard lessons as the report we requested on the James Webb Space Telescope highlighted the ongoing problems of this flagship mission. We have faced the facts and made corrections. I am confident we are on the right path with JWST as we focus on improved project management. We will continue this vigilance in NASA's other missions, as we have with the upcoming JUNO and GRAIL, which are on cost and on schedule.

Today we're focused on bringing about a leaner, more responsive NASA. We are going to live within our means and responsibly invest in the future.

We're going to manage our programs better and look for new ways of doing business. We will slow hirings at Headquarters and the human space flight centers in the coming months to align our workforce numbers and skills with our requirements.

But, each of our centers will benefit from revitalization plans that will help us be better stewards of our communities, make better use of our infrastructure and help us to meet the President's clean energy goals.

We've released our Strategic Plan today in tandem with this budget. It outlines the core vision, mission and values we will adhere to as we make the necessary changes to perform at an even higher level and do the big things that are expected of us.

Despite the challenges, this budget sets ambitious but achievable goals that foster America's continued leadership in space and science exploration. Goals that implement a rare bi-partisan agreement on how this nation should invest in its future success.

In order to win the future, we must out-educate, out-innovate and out build the rest of the world. And NASA is at the forefront of this bold endeavor.

Now, here to go over the specific details of our 2012 budget is NASA's Chief Financial Officer Dr. Beth Robinson.